

Congressman John Barrow (GA-12) today joined with his colleagues of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition to announce the Blue Dog Benchmarks for Fiscal Reform – an aggressive set of targets for long-term fiscal reform and deficit reduction that includes cutting the deficit by \$4 trillion over the next 10 years, with the largest deficit cuts in history by 2014.

The Blue Dogs also advocated keeping all options on the table in an effort to bring Republicans and Democrats together for a responsible, bipartisan discussion about the long-term fiscal health of the country.

“It wasn't just one part of the federal budget that got us in the fix we're in, and we won't get out by focusing on just one part of the federal budget either,” said Congressman Barrow, Blue Dog Co-Chair. “Our goal is to put everything on the table - tax reform, spending cuts, new accountability measures - and to start a real conversation with folks on both sides of the aisle about how to get our country back on a fiscally sustainable path.”

“We are spending all of our time in the House in a debate over 15 percent of the federal budget when the truth is we could eliminate every single non-defense federal program and still run huge annual deficits,” said Congressman Mike Ross (AR-4), Blue Dog Co-Chair. “Targeted cuts in spending are an important part of the solution, but we are kidding ourselves – and the American people – if we think cutting a few hundred billion dollars is going to eliminate our deficit and solve our long-term debt crisis. We have to take a comprehensive approach to our nation's finances, and no one party can do it alone. The Blue Dogs are inviting everyone to the table because until we start having a grown-up conversation, we will continue to mortgage our future on the backs of our children.”

Following are the Blue Dog Benchmarks for Fiscal Reform:

- Largest deficit cuts in history by 2014
- Cut the deficit by \$4 trillion over the next 10 years
- Stabilize the debt and maintain a debt ratio to 60 percent of GDP by 2024
- Return to 2008 spending levels by 2013
- Reduce the deficit to 2.3 percent of GDP in 4 years
- Reduce the size of government
- Achieve deficit reduction with 2/3 spending cuts, 1/3 tax reform
- Everything must be on the table: Discretionary Spending Cuts – both security and

non-security; Tax Reform; Entitlement Reform; Other Mandatory Policies; and Process Reforms.

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the nation. Currently there are 25 members of the Blue Dog Coalition.

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